



State Representative

33rd District

Shay Schual-Berke

2007 Session Report



Dear Neighbors,

Mother Nature has certainly made the last several months a bit more eventful than normal. Thankfully, the snowy days that kept students home from school didn't keep lawmakers from making it to the Capitol. We're on track to finish the session by April 22.

This year I've continued my work on health care issues with a particular focus on public health and mental health. As the only M.D. in the Legislature I am trying to strengthen our Public Health system, and make mental health benefits more available through your insurance policies. I can't wait to celebrate these and other health care improvements with you!

I've also had the pleasure of serving as the new Vice-Chair of the House Capital Budget Committee. You'll see many new projects coming to our district as a result of the funding recommended by the committee. I've also continued my work on the House Health Care and Wellness Committee and the House Appropriations Committee.

Inside you'll find a short update on a few of the things I've been working on including:

- *Improving health care access, quality and service for more Washingtonians,*
- *Improving our education system from start to finish,*
- *Investing in ways to make our community a great place to live and raise a family.*

You are my partners in efforts to improve the quality of life in our wonderful state and in the 33rd District. I am honored to represent you, and encourage you to stay in touch with me. Your calls, letters and e-mails help me do my job better, so keep them coming.

Warm regards,

Representative Shay Schual-Berke, M.D. • 33rd Legislative District

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If you're interested in receiving periodic legislative news, send me an e-mail (schual-berke.shay@leg.wa.gov) and I can add you to my list. It's an easy way to stay informed about everything happening in Olympia. You can unsubscribe at any time and I will not share your e-mail address with anyone else.



Quality Education: Giving every child a chance to succeed

In today's global economy, we need think about education as a whole – a process that starts very early in life and doesn't end with just a high school diploma.

If we want our kids to get the best education possible, we need to provide them with a seamless pathway from birth through college.

So this session we've taken good ideas from the Governor, from teachers, parents and others to create a "Five-Point Plan." The plan will not only help guide policy decisions, but budget decisions as well. I believe strongly that with the right investments, we can provide an excellent education for our children.

As I write this, the budget proposals being discussed reflect a strong commitment to these values.

Equal opportunity starts with a high-quality education for every child, leading to a highly-skilled workforce and a prosperous Washington State.

Start early

Timing is a factor in the learning process – the earlier a child gets started, the higher his chances of success. We will expand early learning and preschool opportunities, and begin phasing in all-day kindergarten.

Fund basic education

We've set a high bar for our students and our teachers, but we're not investing enough in the basics to help them get there. We're going to put more resources in lowering class sizes, special education and student transportation.

Help every student succeed and graduate on time

Equal opportunity is a fundamental value of our nation. Economic status, race and culture should not be predictors of academic achievement, but currently they are. To eliminate the education gap we must direct resources to those schools that need them most, and invest in children who are at risk of not graduating.

Put an outstanding teacher in every classroom

Research shows that the most important factor in student learning is a quality teacher, so recruiting and retaining skilled teaching professionals is essential. Our teachers deserve fair compensation, increased time for classroom preparation and professional development, and incentives for joining the profession.

Finish strong – make post-high school opportunities a real option for everyone

In today's global economy, a high school diploma simply isn't enough. Whether it's a four-year college, a two-year technical program or an apprenticeship, post-secondary opportunities will help students gain the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in life and work. We'll work to keep college tuitions low and invest in grants and scholarships that help more families send their children to school.



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Making sure all our children have access to health care

The Governor has set a goal of covering all kids by 2010. As a doctor, I've seen first-hand the challenges we face in providing adequate care to our families, and I fully support the Governor's goal.

Currently, 72,500 children in our state lack health care coverage. The cost of insuring these children is pennies when you consider the cost-savings of improving the health of our kids to prevent costly diseases and illnesses down the road.

Lawmakers took a giant step this session when we passed a bill to step-up outreach to low-income families and expand health insurance coverage for more families. Our goal

was not only to cover more kids, but to improve their health.

The bill signed by the Governor will make it easier for families to get coverage for their kids and promote better health through partnerships with schools, providers and parents.



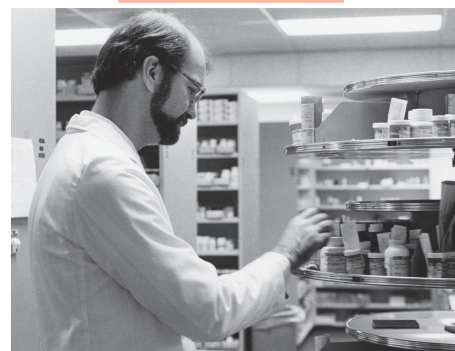
Rep. Schual-Berke on the House floor speaking in favor of health care for kids.

The cost of one emergency room visit = 1 year of health coverage for a child. We can save money by making sure children receive regular, preventive care.



New legislation makes health care for kids more affordable

Family income level	How much coverage will cost for family
Up to 200% of federal poverty level (\$41,300 for a family of four)	Free - all children up to age 19 will receive full coverage
Between 200% and 250% FPL	\$15/month per child
Between 250% and 300% FPL	Higher premiums based on a sliding scale
300% FPL and above	Full cost- parents can purchase insurance without any subsidy



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33rd Legislative District

Making our community a great place to raise a family

Every two years, the Legislature passes a Capital Budget that includes funding for the brick-and-mortar projects that keep our communities vibrant and up-to-date. Projects range from new parks to sewer treatment plants to school building upgrades.

My work as the new Vice-Chair on the House Capital Budget Committee has taught me a lot about the value of these investments. Our committee unveiled our budget recommendations a couple weeks ago, and if the Senate and Governor agree with our proposal, our community will reap the benefits. I worked hard to make sure local projects received their fair share of funding. Here are examples of the kinds of projects funded in our district:

Keeping the noise down in our schools

Every year I pursue additional funding from the state to help reduce aircraft noise in the Highline School District. We know our kids need and deserve a quiet learning environment, and ongoing renovations are needed for those schools under the flight paths of planes coming and going to Sea-Tac Airport. I have obtained at least \$3.5 million this year to continue this work and am trying to get it to \$5 million by the time the budget gets to the Governor.

Preserving the history of Des Moines

Des Moines, also known as "The Waterland City" has a rich and vibrant history dating from about 1867. We have \$1 million in the budget to help restore the Dining Hall in the Covenant Beach Historic District.



Credit: Des Moines (Wash.) Historical Society Photograph Collection
Covenant Beach picnic – July 1931

Bringing the Thunder to Kent

For a long time, taking the family to a sporting event has often meant planning a trip up to Seattle. But we're getting closer to building a fantastic new facility right here at home just blocks from Kent Station, Sound Transit and Kent Commons. The Capital Budget proposal includes \$3 million for a new Event Center that would not only become home to the Thunderbirds hockey team, but would host a wide range of other family-friendly events. This will be a great new destination spot for South King County, and I'm excited



to be a part of bringing it to our community. I was delighted to help ensure the state made this contribution.

Drawing from project's draft supplemental environmental impact statement.

Students serving a week in Olympia – thank you!

Every year, dozens of local high school students spend a week in Olympia serving as pages. Pages help with everything from ceremonial tasks such as presenting the flags to operational chores like distributing copies of bills to lawmakers during floor sessions.

It was a pleasure hosting the wonderful students below. Thank you for helping make this session a success!



Trevor Larson
Sylvester
Middle School



Daniel Matthews
Mt. Rainier H.S.



Emmaline Mills
Sylvester
Middle School



Evangeline Murray
Sylvester
Middle School



Jacqueline Murray
Sylvester
Middle School